



TACOMA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
HARVEY FELDER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Inspiring Tacoma with great music for the journey

"Tacoma is greatly the richer for having the TSO, and particularly a conductor who truly cares to reach out and share his musical vision."

WHO WE ARE

The above quote from an audience member encapsulates what makes the Tacoma Symphony Orchestra stand out in the South Sound region. The TSO's organizational values are founded on two tenets. First, live orchestral music is vital, compelling, and essential to community quality of life. Second, it is not enough to simply present concerts; we have an organizational imperative to reach across demographic barriers to attract and engage people, young and old, using both performance and education.

This is typified by Music Director Harvey Felder's personal, warm approach from the podium and by the relaxed, informal ethos of our concerts. Beloved for his welcoming stage personality, Maestro Felder talks to the audience frequently, explaining the music and what to listen for. Our musicians smile and acknowledge the audience and have many fans and personal friends among patrons. The TSO provides regional audiences with a "user-friendly" opportunity to hear great live orchestral music in the heart of downtown Tacoma without traveling to Seattle, Portland or further afield.

"I took my two sons and three nieces because I want them to have the experience of going to the symphony. They were enthralled."

WHAT WE DO

The Tacoma Symphony Orchestra's mission – to "inspire, engage and enrich" – is realized through its flagship series of four Classics and two Pops concerts, its Simply Symphonic education program, and choral concerts featuring the acclaimed Tacoma Symphony Chorus.

The core music of the TSO's concert offerings is the great Classical and Romantic orchestral repertoire. In addition, orchestral pops brings the power and versatility of the 80-piece symphony orchestra to bear on American popular music, including Jazz, Motion Picture Soundtrack, Folk, Christian Pop, Broadway, and even Country & Western. The TSO's musicians play this music with the same professionalism and delight that they bring to the traditional repertoire.

Education is intrinsic to the TSO's mission, and the award-winning Simply Symphonic program is its most significant educational offering. In this day and age, even though more data exists than ever before citing the critical importance of music and arts in youth education, the majority of South Sound children have few opportunities to experience a live professional symphony orchestra. For many and perhaps most participating students, Simply Symphonic marks their first exposure to live orchestral music and their first time ever at the Pantages Theater in downtown Tacoma. The impact this has on them has to be seen to be fully appreciated.

"The children could not stop talking about how much they enjoyed it. I am confident that this experience made them fans for life."

Classics, Pops, and Education – these are the three legs of the TSO's stool, the three elements of how it realizes its mission. Together, these elements impact 10,000 adult concertgoers and 5,000 students annually.

OUR IMPACT

The TSO makes its home at the Broadway Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA) in downtown Tacoma. Most of our concerts take place in the center's historic Pantages Theater, or in the smaller and more intimate Rialto Theater. We are a *resident performing arts organization*, employing 80-plus local musicians. (This is a distinction from *presenting* performing arts organizations, which bring nationally and internationally acclaimed artists to town.) Our musicians impact thousands of people beyond the walls of the Broadway Center as teachers, mentors, clinicians and solo performers. The economic impact of this is significant, since most of the "community investment" remains squarely in the regional economy. Taken collectively, Tacoma's vibrant performing and visual arts community has served as a catalyst for the city's re-emergence from the severe downturns of the '70s and '80s into a burgeoning destination for arts activities, specialty shops and restaurants, as well as a thriving center for new urban living.

The TSO gives back to the community in many ways. The organization offers ticket discounts to seniors, students and enlisted military personnel. In collaboration with The United Way of Pierce County and generous corporate grantors, the TSO regularly provides free tickets to community agencies serving the economically challenged in our midst. Schools participating in Simply Symphonic pay only a nominal fee, with the TSO absorbing 85% of the program costs.

"I was stunned. It was superb, excellent, stupendous. The phrasing, the quality, the performance was superior. Mere words can't describe the experience."

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Because of the need to keep ticket prices and program fees accessible and affordable, only 30% of the TSO's budget is covered by ticket sales and other earned revenue. The balance is raised by annual individual contributions, corporate sponsorships, foundation grants, and special events. Your support in one or more of these areas will enable the TSO to continue serving the community in a financially sustainable manner.

In spite of challenging economics times, the TSO has balanced its budget (\$950,000) in recent seasons and grown both its reserves and permanent endowment. 100% of the TSO's 20 voting Board members makes a leadership gift and subscribes to the concerts. Every Board member is deeply involved in governance, advocacy, and in the TSO's far-reaching fund development program. We invite you to join us in the exciting partnership of building the most vital, responsive and impactful performing arts organization in the South Sound.

*"Arts & culture are essential to a healthy, dynamic community."
– Greater Tacoma Community Foundation*

"The arts are embedded in what we do as a city." – Tacoma Mayor Marilyn Strickland